

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

For the Year ending 31st December, 1925,

TO THE CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS of the Radstock Urban District Council in
General Meeting assembled, April 16th, 1926.

GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour to present my fourteenth annual report on the Sanitary condition and Health of your district for the year ending December 31st, 1925.

The Ministry of Health have directed that the Report for 1925 shall be a "Survey Report."

The primary object of Survey Reports is to review the needs of the area in relation to the protection of the public health, and the progress made in meeting these needs.

(A) NATURAL AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA.

- (1) Area (in acres), 997 Acres.
- (2) Population (Census 1921), 3,682. Estimated 1925, 3,855.
- (3) Physical Features and General Character of the Area.

The district is situated on the main Bath to Wells Road, 8 miles from the former, and 12 from the latter city.

The district is intersected by two valleys: the river Somer flowing through the large valley. The centre of the town occupies the large valley and is thus surrounded by high ground.

Geology. Lias formation on the new red sandstone.

Occupation. Coal Mining, Wagon Repair Works, Saw Mills, and Farming.

- (4) Number of inhabited houses (1921), 898; (1924), 944; (1925), 962.
- (5) Number of families or separate occupiers (1921), 941; (1924), 982; (1925), 997.
- (6) Rateable value: £16,545.
Sum represented by a penny rate, £53.
- (7) Vital Statistics:

Births: The number of births registered during the year was 71; (Boys 34), (Girls 37), giving a birth rate of 18.6 per 1,000 persons living in the district. The birth-rate for 1924 was 16.7. There was one illegitimate birth.

Deaths: The number of deaths registered during the year was 30; (Males 8), (Females 22). This gives a death rate of 7.7. The death rate for 1924 was 11.7.

The following table shows the ages at which death occurred in the district:—

Under 1 year	..	..	..	..	3
1 year and under 2 years	..	..	..	..	0
2 years and under 5 years	..	..	..	..	1
5 years and under 15 years	..	..	..	..	0
15 years and under 25 years	..	..	..	..	2
25 years and under 45 years	..	..	..	..	1
45 years and under 65 years	..	..	..	..	7
65 years and upwards	..	..	..	..	16
Total	..	..	..	..	30

There were 3 deaths under 1 year of age, giving an infantile mortality rate of 42.2 per 1,000 births. The rate for 1924 was 46.8.

Deaths under 1 year of age:

Under 1 week	..	..	2
1—4 weeks	..	..	0
1—6 months	..	..	0
6—12 months	..	..	1
Total	..	..	3

The following table gives the causes of death.

Cause of Death.				M	F
All Causes	..	..	..	8	22
Influenza	..	..	..	0	2
Pulmonary Tuberculosis	..	..	..	0	1
Cancer	..	..	..	2	2
Diabetes	..	..	..	1	0
Heart Disease	..	..	..	0	1
Arterio-sclerosis	..	..	..	1	0
Bronchitis	..	..	..	1	4
Pneumonia	..	..	..	0	1
Other Respiratory Diseases	..	..	..	0	1
Acute and Chronic Nephritis	..	..	..	0	1
Congenital Debility and Premature Birth	..	..	..	0	2
Deaths from Violence	..	..	..	1	0
Other Defined Diseases	..	..	..	2	7

AMOUNT OF POOR LAW RELIEF.

It is difficult to estimate this exactly, but by the kindness of the Relieving Officer I am able to present the following figures:—

Number of persons receiving relief during half year ending March 31st, 1925:—

Men	..	..	39
Women	..	..	53
Children	..	..	79
Total	..	..	171

Cost equals £628 13. 3d.

Number of persons receiving relief during the half year ending September 30th, 1925:—

Men	..	..	57
Women	..	..	68
Children	..	..	117
Total	..	..	242

Cost equals £725 15s. 0d.

CAUSES OF SICKNESS.

No special cause of Sickness or invalidity have occurred in the district during the year except an epidemic of Measles in the Autumn. Coal Mining does not appear to be prejudicial to good health.

(B) GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES IN THE AREA.

CLINICS AND TREATMENT CENTRES.

No arrangement exists for attending to the health of expectant mothers.

A County Council Tuberculosis Dispensary and Venereal Clinic is situated in the district. These are open one day per week. During the last year an Orthopaedic Clinic has been opened and is already doing very useful work.

There is no Isolation Hospital serving the district, but, fortunately, by the courtesy of the Midsomer Norton Urban District Council and their Medical Officer of Health, I am permitted to receive urgent cases to the Isolation Hospital at Welton. No provision is made for small pox cases. The proposed Joint Isolation Hospital with other districts is urgently needed. I hope the Council will do all in their power to push forward the scheme, as it is a real necessity. There is no Hospital in the district subsidised by the local authority or the County Council.

General Hospital Work is carried out by the Bath Royal United Hospital, the Bristol Hospital and the Paulton Memorial Hospital. Institutional provision for unmarried mothers, illegitimate infants and homeless children does not exist in the area.

AMBULANCE FACILITIES.

- (a) **INFECTIOUS DISEASES CASES.**—Improvisation is made from a brougham.
- (b) **NON-INFECTIOUS AND ACCIDENT CASES.**—Two ambulances supply the district. One of these is run in connection with the Bristol Red Cross Societies' Scheme, and provides a very efficient service.

PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICERS OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY.

This consists of a part time Medical Officer of Health and a Sanitary Inspector, who combines the duties of his offices with those of Surveyor to the Council and employs 2 Assistants

PROFESSIONAL NURSING IN THE HOME.

- (a) **GENERAL.**—The Radstock and Writhlington Nursing Association provide two nurses for the district. These nurses work in connection with the Somerset County Nursing Association and under this arrangement nursing mothers and infants are regularly visited and advice given.
- (b) **INFECTIOUS DISEASES, e.g. Measles, etc.**—The County Medical Officer of Health provides nurses on the application of the Local Medical Officer of Health.
- MIDWIVES.**—Two are employed in the district, supervision being carried out by the Somerset County Nursing Association.
- CHEMICAL WORK.**—The County Council Laboratories at Weston-super-Mare deal with all chemical and pathological work.

LEGISLATION IN FORCE.

The only adoptive Act in force is Part 3 of the Public Health Amendment Act, 1890, dealing with Sanitary and other Provisions. Bye-laws with respect to New Streets and Buildings, Nuisances, Slaughter Houses and Lodging Houses are in force. These are all based on the Model Bye-laws of the late Local Government Board.

PREVALENCE OF CONTROL OVER INFECTIOUS DISEASES. NOTIFIABLE INFECTIOUS DISEASES, 1925.

Diseases.	Total Cases Notified.	Cases admitted to Hospital.	Total Deaths.
Lobar Pneumonia	7	0	1
Influenzal Pneumonia	5	0	1
Erysipelas	3	0	0
Pulmonary Tuberculosis	2	0	0
Other Tuberculosis	2	0	0
Small Pox	0	0	0
Scarlet Fever	0	0	0
Diphtheria	0	0	0
Puerperal Fever	0	0	0
Enteric Fever	0	0	0
Total	19	—	—

Diphtheria Antitoxin is supplied free by the Council on request. No case of Encephalitis Lethargica has been reported during the year.

DISINFECTION OF HOUSES, ETC.—Formalin Spraying and Fumigation are used for living rooms. In cases of Tuberculosis a 1 in 50 Izal Spray is used. Disinfectants are supplied free. There is no apparatus for disinfecting clothing and bedding. No use has been made of the Tests known as the Schick and Dick tests in Diphtheria and Scarlet Fever respectively, or of the recently developed artificial methods of immunisation against these diseases.

No Vaccinations have been performed by the Medical Officer of Health under the Public Health (Small Pox Prevention) Regulations, 1917.

INFLUENZA.—Influenza prevailed during the early part of the year, and was mostly of the Gastric type. Two deaths were recorded as due to this disease. No special actions were taken.

TUBERCULOSIS.

Age periods	New cases.				Deaths			
	pulmon-ary		non-pul.		pulmon-ary		non-pul.	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
0 ..	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1 ..	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
5 ..	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
10 ..	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
15 ..	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
20 ..	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
25 ..	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
35 ..	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
45 ..	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
55 ..	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
65 & up.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0

PUBLIC HEALTH (PREVENTION OF TUBERCULOSIS) REGULATIONS, 1921.

No action has been taken under these regulations.

PUBLIC HEALTH ACT, 1925 (Sect. 62).

It has not been necessary to take any action under this Act.

MORTUARY.

No Mortuary has yet been provided for the district. Post Mortems have now to be performed in the parlour of small houses—not a healthy procedure, and distinctly unpleasant for the relatives.

WATER.

The town is supplied with a constant supply by means of a gravitation system, obtained from the Bottlehead Springs at Downhead, in the Shepton Mallet Rural Area, about 10 miles distant.

Under Agreement, the Council also supplies parts of the Midsomer Norton U.D., Bath R.D. and Frome R.D. areas.

The quality of the water is good.

SEWERAGE.

The town is provided with a modern sewerage system, the works being situated at the East end of the Parish, and have been found satisfactory.

CLOSETS.

The closet accommodation in the district is approximately 610 W.C.'s, 100 hand-flushed W.C.'s and 54 earth closets.

SCAVENGING.

The town is scavenged once a week for the removal and disposal of house refuse. This system is working satisfactorily.

INSPECTION.

A house-to-house inspection of the District is in progress, 531 premises having been visited, representing about one-half of the district. A report is being prepared for presentation to the Council.

SMOKE ABATEMENT.

The town being in a colliery area, a nuisance does exist, owing to the density of the smoke from the colliery stacks. This matter has been discussed by the Council, and steps are being taken for the abatement of the nuisance.

SCHOOLS.

The water is obtained from the public supply. The sanitary condition of the W.C.'s and Urinals are satisfactory.

HOUSING.

- (a) A housing shortage does exist in the district.
- (b) Steps are being taken by the Council by building as quickly as possible on a site adjoining the Wells Road. 130 Houses have been erected on this site, under the following Schemes:—

Housing (1912) Scheme	40
Housing (1920) Scheme	40
Housing (1923) Scheme	14
Housing (1924) Scheme)	36
Total	130

Number of Houses erected during the year by the Local Authority, 20.

By other persons, 1.

Over and above the houses erected and let, there are about 86 applications for Houses still on the Council's Register. Building by private enterprise is encouraged, but the Radstock Co-operative Society is the only body to respond, having in course of erection 16 houses.

OVERCROWDING.

(1) EXTENT. The extent of overcrowding in the district is not great.

(2) CAUSES. The shortage of houses.

(3) MEASURES TAKEN.—Preference is given to those families who are over-crowded when selecting new tenants for the Council's houses.

(4) CASES.—Five cases of overcrowding have been noted during the year 1925, and will be dealt with as new houses are available.

FITNESS OF HOUSES.

If further houses were provided the Council would then be in a position to enforce the repairs of the worst class of house, or, alternatively, to close them as unfit for human habitation.

UNHEALTHY AREAS.

Nil.

BYE-LAWS.

The existing Bye-laws have been revised and brought up-to-date, and the Draft approved by the Ministry of Health. Copies are being printed for distribution amongst Builders, etc., in the district.

GENERALLY.

Slaughter Houses, Cowsheds, Dairies and Milkshops, etc., have been inspected at intervals, and were found satisfactory.

HOUSING STATISTICS FOR THE YEAR 1925.

Number of new houses erected during the year :—

(a) Total 20.

1. By the Local Authority, 20.

2. By other persons, nil.

UNFIT DWELLING HOUSES.

1. Total number of dwelling houses inspected for housing defects, 531.

2. Nil.

3. Nil.

4. Nil.

REMEDY OF DEFECTS WITHOUT SERVICE OF FORMAL NOTICE.

Number of defective dwelling houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their officers, nil.

ACTION UNDER STATUTORY POWERS.

A. *Proceedings under Sec. 3 of the Housing Act, 1925.*

1. Number of dwelling houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs. None.

2. Number of dwelling houses which were rendered fit after service of formal notices :—

(a) By Owners. None.

(b) By Local Authority in default of owners. None.

(c) Number of dwelling houses in respect of which Closing Orders became operative in pursuance of declarations by owners of intention to close. None.

B. *Proceedings under Public Health Acts.*

1. Number of dwelling houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied. None.

2. Number of dwelling houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices :—

(a) By owners. None.

(b) By Local Authority in default of owners. None.

HOUSING STATISTICS FOR THE YEAR 1925.

C. *Proceedings under Secs. 11, 14 and 15 of the Housing Act, 1925.*

1. Number of representations made with a view to the making of Closing Orders. None.

2. Number of dwelling houses in respect of which Closing Orders were made. None.

3. Number of dwelling houses in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the dwelling houses having been rendered fit. None.

4. Number of dwelling houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made. None.

5. Number of dwelling houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders. None.

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

A. *Milk Supply.*

The quality of the Milk produced and brought in the area is good. No Veterinary Inspector has been appointed by the Council, but the Cowsheds and Dairies are inspected periodically by the Sanitary Inspector and M.O.H. under the Dairies, Cowsheds and Milkshops Orders. At the last inspection they were found to be in a good condition.

1. Action taken as to tuberculous milk and tuberculous cattle. No cases.

2. Number of licences granted for the sale of Milk under special designations, classified as in the Fourth Schedule to the Milk (Special Designations) Order, 1923 : types of apparatus licensed for the pasteurisation of milk. None.

3. Refusal or revocation of registration of retailers or of licences for graded Milk, with reasons for the refusal or revocation. None.

4. The summarized results of the bacteriological examination of samples of graded and other Milk. During the year there has been one Milk prosecution in the district, the charge being brought against a farmer at Shoscombe, for the supply of milk in bulk to a dairy, containing 8 per cent. of added water. The case was dismissed.

The number of Distributors on the Register : 2.
The number of Producers on the Register : 6.

The Register for this District is complete : all distributors and producers being duly registered. Practical hints are given to distributors, producers and their employees during inspection, and it has been found that this goes a long way towards improving milk supply conditions.

B. *Meat.*

The Slaughter Houses have been inspected as required during the year and were found in good order, and in accordance with the Regulations.

The Public Health (Meat) Regulations, 1924, have been put into force and are working satisfactory.

Extensive alterations have been made to the Market, with the result all meat and food stalls are properly housed under cover and well protected.

The shops and stalls are inspected weekly.

No meat has been condemned during the year.

I have the honour to be, Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

J. E. SCALES,

M.O.H.

Radstock : April, 1926.

Urban District Council of Radstock,

In the County of Somerset.

Annual Report OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

(Dr. J. E. SCALES).

For the Year ending 31st December, 1925.

April, 1926.

"Somerset Guardian" Office, Radstock